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AGS PGOV, CU

BJ CUBAN FOREIGN POLICY VIEWS

REF: A) HAVANA 9997, B) MEXICO 11429, C) MEXICO 11409

1. C - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. DEPARTMENT APPRECIATES POST'S REPORTING AND COMMENTARY ON CASTRO'S JULY 26 SPEECHES AND OTHER RECENT HIGH LEVEL CUBAN FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENTS. DEPARTMENT IS SEEKING TO OBTAIN FOR USINT A COPY OF CASTRO'S JULY 28 IMPROMPTU CONFERENCE WITH FOREIGN PRESS, ASSUMING THAT NETWORKS WILL PROVIDE IT.

3. WITH REFERENCE TO YOUR SCHEDULED LUNCHEON WITH CUBAN VICE MINISTER ALARCON ON AUGUST 3 YOU SHOULD TRY TO DRAW HIM OUT ON CONSISTENCY OF ALLEGED CUBAN DESIRE FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WITH CUBA'S WELL KNOWN "INTERNATIONALISM", WHICH IS A SELF-IMPOSED DUTY TO SUPPORT REVOLUTIONS AS CUBA SEES FIT. IN PARTICULAR, IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO KNOW WHAT FORMULA FOR "SELF-DETERMINATION", WHICH CUBA CLAIMS TO FAVOR, IT WOULD WISH TO SEE EMPLOYED IN THE REGION. IF ELECTIONS IN EL SALVADOR ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE TO CUBA, HOW DOES IT PROPOSE THAT THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE OF EL SALVADOR BE TESTED ON THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION OF HOW THEY WILL BE GOVERNED? WHAT SORT OF "PLURALISM", IF ANY, DOES CUBA ENVISION FOR NICARAGUA? WHAT VERIFICATION MEASURES WOULD CUBA SUPPORT. WHAT DOES IT THINK OF "DEMOCRACY?"

4. YOU SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THAT CUBA'S PUBLIC ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONTADORA PROCESS IS NOTHING NEW ALTHOUGH ITS CURRENT EMPHASIS ON THE NEED FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT MAY REFLECT CASTRO'S PRESENT CONCERN ABOUT THE MILITARY SITUATION IN THE REGION. WHILE WE ARE WILLING TO GIVE CASTRO THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT IN HIS ASSERTION THAT HE IS PREPARED TO CONTRIBUTE TO SUCH A SOLUTION, THE FACT IS THAT CUBA HAS MUCH FOR WHICH TO ANSWER. WE HAVE HAD NO CAUSE TO BELIEVE THAT CUBA'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES HAVE CHANGED, INCLUDING CONSOLIDATION OF THE SANDINISTA

REGIME AND POWER-SHARING, LEADING TO POWER SEIZURE, BY THE SALVADORAN GUERRILLAS. CONTRARY TO HIS ASSERTION TO THE FOREIGN PRESS, WE BELIEVE IT IS A MAJOR CUBAN OBJECTIVE TO DIVIDE THE UNITED STATES FROM LATIN AMERICA. ONCE U.S. INFLUENCE IN THE REGION IS REDUCED, THE WORK OF PRO-CUBAN REVOLUTIONARIES WILL BE MUCH MORE SIMPLE.

5. WITH REFERENCE TO CUBAN INTENTIONS IN NICARAGUA, DEPARTMENT BELIEVES IT IS DECIDEDLY PREMATURE TO ASSUME THAT CASTRO HAS TAKEN A DECISION TO LIMIT OR EVEN CUT BACK THE CUBAN MILITARY PRESENCE. AS BEFORE, HE MUST BALANCE HIS CONCERN FOR THE SURVIVAL OF THE SANDINISTAS AGAINST HIS EVALUATION OF THE THREAT TO CUBA ITSELF IF CUBA EXPANDS THE USE OF FORCE IN CENTRAL AMERICA. WE SUSPECT THAT CUBA'S CURRENT EMPHASIS ON NEGOTIATIONS IS A TACTICAL PLOY DESIGNED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF WIDESPREAD FEARS OF A LARGER, REGIONAL WAR. CASTRO TOLD THE CONTADORA PRESIDENTS THAT CUBA COULD ACCEPT ANY SOLUTION THAT IS ACCEPTABLE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA, THE SALVADOR REVOLUTIONARIES AND OTHER REVOLUTIONARIES IN THE REGION, BUT IT REMAINS OBSCURE WHAT THAT MIGHT BE. MOREOVER, IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE REMARKS (REF A) CASTRO, IN THE CONTEXT OF A SALVADORAN SETTLEMENT, SEEMED TO GO FURTHER BY SAYING THAT CUBA HAD ITS OWN INTERESTS THAT HAD TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN SUCH A SETTLEMENT. IN SHORT, WHILE CUBAN TACTICS MAY BE UNDER REVIEW, WE HAVE SEEN NO CONVINCING SIGN TO DATE THAT CASTRO'S CONCERN FOR U.S. POWER HAS CAUSED HIM TO CHANGE HIS BASIC STRATEGY FOR THE REGION.

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